

## Foundations of Our Government: What is civic virtue?

Philosophers have debated the definition of virtue for thousands of years. Thinking about virtue is an essential part of the human experience and an essential part of thinking about what constitutes self-governance and a healthy civil society.

Write your own answers to the following questions in the “My Thoughts” column. You will use these questions and your responses as the basis for a fishbowl discussion.

| Questions  | My Thoughts | Notes from Fishbowl |
|--|-------------|---------------------|
| 1. What is virtue? Does this differ from civic virtue? Explain.                  |             |                     |
| 2. What are some examples of virtues? How would you define each?                 |             |                     |
| 3. Who are some examples of virtuous people? Explain why you chose each example. |             |                     |

| Questions  | My Thoughts | Notes from Fishbowl |
|--|-------------|---------------------|
| 4. Can virtue be taught or acquired through practice? Or do humans possess virtue by nature?   |             |                     |
| 5. What is the connection between individual virtue and maintaining a healthy civil society?   |             |                     |
| 6. What virtues are important to ensure that the United States maintains a healthy civil society? Define each virtue you come up with in your own words. |             |                     |

### After the fishbowl: Reflection and analysis questions:

1. What did you observe during the discussion?
2. What is one thing you heard that resulted in changing your mind? Explain.
3. If there was a comment or question you really wanted to add to the discussion but were unable to, note that here.
4. Did you prefer being on the inside or the outside of the fishbowl? Why?
5. After this discussion, would you alter any of your responses to the questions above? Explain.
6. What connections can you make between this discussion and studying American civil society and government?